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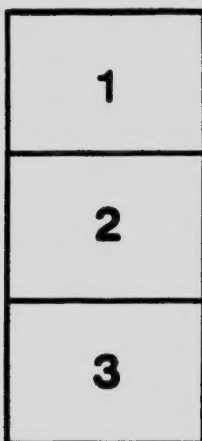
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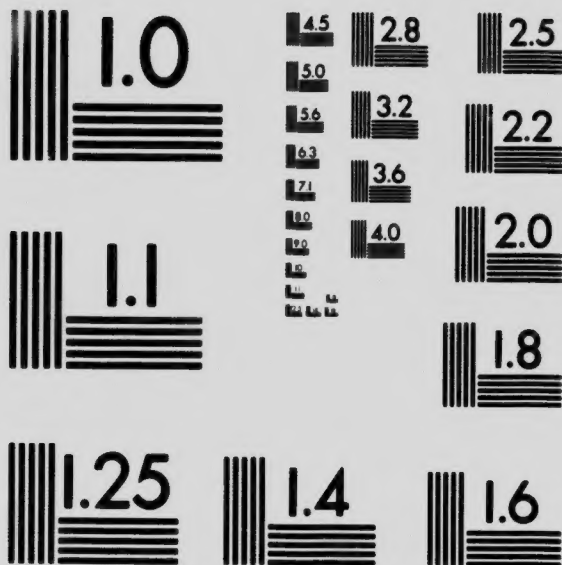
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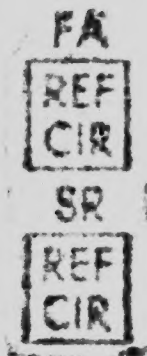
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JEWELERS BY APPOINTMENT
- TO -
His Excellency the Governor General

A Talk on Jewels

COMPILED AND PUBLISHED BY

Ryrie Bros.,

**DIAMOND
MERCHANTS,**

**118, 120, 122, 124 Yonge Street,
Toronto.**

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A Talk on Jewels

NOTE.—The very gratifying reception accorded our "Talk on Jewels" last year has prompted us to continue its publication this summer also, in the hope that its perusal may prove of interest to you and profit to ourselves.

RYRIE BROS.

COMPILED AND PUBLISHED BY

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**DIAMOND
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NOTE.

THIS little "talk on jewels" was recently given by special request before the Rosedale School Art League ' our Mr. James Ryrie, and was so favorably received that we have been prompted to publish it in this form, believing that its perusal will be of interest to all who love jewels.

RYRIE BROS.,
DIAMOND MERCHANTS,
TORONTO.



PHOTO OF STORE FRONT.

♦
THE door through which you
are always welcome to enter
whether as "intending pur-
chaser" or "idle sight-seer."



CHAPTER I.

THE LOVE OF JEWELS.

THE love of jewels seems to be innate in the human breast. Even the rude savage is not devoid of it. Whilst every jewel has its own particular admirers, all seem to unite in singing the praises of the diamond. Although the first known mention made of it dates back to an Indian epic one thousand years before Christ, its sway is still supreme and ever increasing.

If at times we are disposed to feel apologetic for indulging in such a weakness, it may be of some comfort to be reminded that that masterly man, Henry Ward Beecher, thought it not beneath his dignity to carry in his pocket a number of such choice gems, at which he frequently gazed, and fondled lovingly. Even royalty, that condition of life described by Hannah Moore as being "too high for hope," is not too high to escape the fascination, and, in their

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quest for larger empire, our sovereigns are not unmindful of these gaudy toys.

Poets and novelists of old have woven a tissue of romance and adventure around them even as Stevenson and Conan Doyle in our own day, but if the story of these royal jewels could be told in detail it would be found once more that—"truth is stranger than fiction."

As too many statistics are liable to bring on an attack of mental dyspepsia, I will refer to but three of these jewels—the three that are most likely to be of interest to you. Before doing so, however, as I will frequently have to refer to the term "Carat," I would like to say that we must not confuse it with the term "Karat" as applied to gold. In the latter case it refers to quality, whilst as applied to diamonds it refers to weight only. Pure gold, as you know, is divided into 24 parts, each of which is termed a "karat." As in its pure state it is impossible to manufacture it, its wearing qualities being too soft, it is necessary to introduce an alloy of some other metal, and when we speak of 18K gold it means 18 parts pure gold and 6 parts of alloy.

As applied to diamonds, however, the term is derived from an Indian seed which,

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when dry, is absolutely uniform in weight, and when we speak of a stone weighing 100 carats it simply means that it weighs exactly the same as 100 such seeds. That you may have a better idea of the size represented by a carat, I would say that the end of an ordinary lead pencil represents the surface of a stone between one and one and a half carats. In speaking of a 100 carat stone, however, it must not be supposed that it is equal in surface to 100 pencil ends as the weight is distributed over the entire stone, depth included. At most such a stone would not represent over 8 or 10 of these.

CHAPTER II.

THE GREAT JEWELS.

The first of the crown jewels of which I shall make mention is the "Kohinoor," which is the Indian for "Mountain of Light." The earliest positive knowledge we have of this stone was in the Treasury of Delhi in the year 1526 and it then weighed 793 carats. Through unskilful cutting it was reduced to 186 carats and the royal owner was so incensed that he ordered the arrest and imprisonment of the culprit for many years.

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After various vicissitudes, in which bloodshed and rapine were not unknown, we next find it at the capture of Lahore when it fell into the possession of the British soldiers and was by them presented to Her late Majesty on July 3, 1850.

When exhibited at the great Exposition of 1851, notwithstanding its imperfections, it attracted very great attention, and a consultation of the leading scientific men of the day, Sir David Brewster among them, was held to consider the advisability of trying to perfect it by recutting. Although their opinion was averse to such an attempt, a Mr. Coster of Amsterdam, who was familiar with such matters, was so sanguine of the results that the gem was eventually entrusted to him and the result justified the action, as, whilst it now stands at only 106 1-16 carats, it has the same surface as before and instead of being lustreless is brimful of light and fire.

Crossing the English Channel, we enter the French Republic, and amongst the treasures which they once possessed, we find the Pitt Diamond, now known as the Regent, which weighs 136 $\frac{3}{4}$ carats. This stone was originally bought by a Hindoo merchant and after many interesting adventures was purchased by the French

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Government in 1717 for the equivalent of \$675,000. In the rough it weighed some 410 carats and it took two years to cut it at an actual cost of £2,000 sterling—\$10,000.

This stone was worn by the great Napoleon in the pommel of his sword and fell into the hands of the Prussians at Waterloo, and thus passed into the hands of the King of Prussia. It is reputed to be one of the finest gems, although square in shape, but contains one small flaw.

Crossing the intervening space, we come to Russia, that country which is now engaging so much of the attention of the world's best statesmen, where we find the Orloff, so called after the celebrated family of that name. This stone is larger than either of the others already mentioned and weighs 194½ carats. It, however, is "Rose cut." The meaning of this term I will explain to you more fully later on.

At one time it is said to have been an eye of a Brahman idol, but was stolen by a Frenchman and sold in Malabar for the equivalent of \$14,000. In 1774 it was purchased by the Russian Government for the equivalent of \$370,000, an annuity of \$16,000 and a patent to the title of nobility. It is now in the imperial scepter and at the coronation services of the present Emperor

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Nicholas II. played an important part. As these stones are not purchasable it may be with a certain amount of envy that one hears their beauties extolled, but I will now make mention of one which is in the market and which may be obtained, provided you can come to satisfactory terms with the owners. This is known as the Jagersfontein Excelsior and was found at Jagersfontein, Orange Free State, that country of which we have heard so much during recent months. On June 30th, 1893, it was found by a native whilst shovelling clay into a truck, who managed to secrete it on his person although a white overseer was standing near at the time. It was evident that theft was not his object, but rather that he might deliver it in person to the manager. As he received a bonus of £150 and the gift of a horse and saddle, it shows that his judgment was not far astray.

In its present state uncut it weighs $971\frac{3}{4}$ carats or $7\frac{1}{2}$ oz.—nearly half a pound. It is a blue white and reminds one of a large broken icicle, being three inches long and two and a half inches round at its thickest point. Unfortunately it has a black spot in the middle which will impair it as a single stone. Cut in two, however,

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it will make a beautifully matched pair. At the mine it was valued at one million dollars. If contemplating the purchase of this stone, however, I would advise you to add about \$10,000 for its cutting and polishing.

A curious circumstance in connection with the finding of this stone is worth mentioning. The firm of Bernheim & Britmeyer had made a contract for the purchase of all diamonds found during the year at a fixed price per carat, based, of course, upon the ordinary run of stones. This contract expired on July 1st or, to be exact, at midnight of June 30th, whereas this stone was found on the evening of this very date thus making a difference of at least nine hundred thousand dollars to them in the result of their year's contract, provided a purchaser is found at the estimated value.

Leaving these concrete cases, we will now speak of diamonds in general.

CHAPTER III.

THE ORIGIN OF THE DIAMOND.

The word "diamond" is derived from the Greek "adamas," meaning indomitable, which, in time, became changed to diamas, hence our word diamond. The Norwegian

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philosopher, Henrick Steffens, defined diamond as quartz raised to self-consciousness. Although not strictly speaking a stone, its material entitles it to a place nearer the organic world than any other mineral substance. It occupies a unique position in many respects. Although termed carbon, it differs in one respect. Whilst carbon conducts electricity, the diamond is a non-conductor. It is the only stone that is perfectly transparent to the Rontgen ray. It is self-luminous, that is, after exposure to sunshine it will give out in the dark what it takes in during the day. Its appearance in the rough is like a piece of gum arabic. It is the hardest known substance, but although so hard it can be burnt with oxygen at a temperature of about fourteen hundred degrees Fahrenheit.

The origin of the diamond has until very recently been a perfect mystery. India had been the only source of supply until discovered in Brazil in 1728. Although usually found in beds of rivers and adjacent places, in both of these countries wherever found it was always recognized as an immigrant and not in its native place. This was evident from the fact that it was always nonadherent, none of them having flat sides indicating that they had been

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broken off any other body, but were found just as one might pick up a stray coin in the sands of the seashore that had been dropped by accident or carried in by the action of the water. It remained, however, for what is known as the dry diggings of South Africa interpreted in the light of the laboratory to give the desired key. These were discovered in 1870, some three years after a white pebble had been picked up and taken by an Irish ostrich hunter or trader to Cape Town.

This part of Africa is what is known as the Karoo Formation, supposed to have been a great inland sea ages before man appeared upon the earth, when the toad and lizard were the highest types of animal life. At this particular part is centred within a radius of a few miles: The Kimberley, Debeers, Dutoitspan, Bultfontein, Weselton, Leicester, Kaffirfontein, Jagersfontein and Excelsior mines. One thing to be borne in mind is that even in this district the gems are not scattered indiscriminately but in shoots or pipes extending down into the bowels of the earth. One other fact worthy of notice is that these pipes are filled throughout with the same sort of clay and not with the various strata of the earth as might be expected; whilst the excavations

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in some instances have reached two thousand feet below the surface, the blue clay is identical with that turned by the pickaxe on the surface some thirty years ago. Yet another fact is that these different shoots have been supplied from different sources or under slightly different conditions inasmuch as an expert has little difficulty in detecting from which particular mine the stone has come because of its color, and finally it is to be noted that at the lowest depth the supply is greater than at the surface, although the great cost of working makes it less remunerative.

It is at this point that the laboratory has rendered invaluable assistance. The diamond is carbon ; charcoal too is carbon of an ordinary kind. Graphite is the same substance modified by strong heat apart from extraordinary pressure, whilst the Diamond is the outcome of high temperature combined with high pressure. This fact the laboratory has demonstrated for us. It has also shown us that iron fused will dissolve carbon at a temperature of 3,500 centigrade, that is, about 6330 Fahrenheit, a temperature beside which our sweltering "hundred degrees in the shade" seems quite refreshing. When so dissolved, if plunged into water there is formed a thin layer of

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iron enclosing a substance which expands as it crystallizes, as does water when it freezes, thus disengaging the crystal from the iron shell in about a fortnight. The largest crystal yet produced is but one fiftieth of an inch in diameter and went to pieces in about three months, but was quite sufficient to explain the process as carried on in the centre of the earth, Nature's laboratory.

It is, of course, a recognized fact that our earth has for ages been cooling from the surface and even at present at the centre it is a molten mass. The origin of the diamond is attributed to the filtering through of the water of these long extinct inland seas, which acting upon the carbides, that is, the carbon fused with metal, formed the crystals which by gases so generated were expelled through the pipes or shoots, carrying with them this substance known as the blue earth of Kimberley.

Although this is the only point at which diamonds are now found, scientists agree that there is no valid reason to suppose that they may not be found in almost any other part of the world where similar volcanic action is evident, and it is still a mystery where the diamonds of Brazil and India had their birth, but certain it is that down in the depths of the earth far beyond the

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reach of man they lie in abundance awaiting some such volcanic action to send them forth.

One strange fact worthy of mention in connection with these crystals or diamonds in the rough is that sometimes even the warmth of the hand will cause them to fly to splinters after being taken from the clay, owing, it is supposed, either to their originally having been strained or to the presence of highly condensed gas within them. For this reason when so suspected they are always shipped enclosed in a raw potato or other substance.

As already stated, India was the home of the diamond until the year 1728, when discovered in Brazil, these two countries dividing the honors until the discovery of the Kimberley mines in 1870. At the present time, however, the Kimberley and other mines in South Africa are really the only sources of supply. Whilst the average before their discovery in 1870 was about sixty thousand carats per annum, during the next twenty years, that is from 1870 to 1890, the entire output of Africa was forty-three million carats, that is, an average of over two million carats per annum.

Although there were at one time quite a number of mine claims in South Africa,

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these were all consolidated in the year 1889 into what is known as the DeBeers Consolidated, in which the celebrated Cecil Rhodes was the moving spirit, and which in a large measure has given him the strong position he now holds in the affairs of that country.

In Brazil, when a native found a 17 carat stone he was entitled to his liberty, from which it may be inferred that the finding of such stones was by no means too common an event. Of the stones found, however, many of course are of no use for cutting, as they are so badly flawed, or so poor in color, or of such bad shape, that they cannot be used for such purposes. These are called "Bort," and are simply pounded in a mortar, the dust being used for the cutting of better stones, as the diamond, being the hardest known substance, can be touched with nothing but diamond, hence the expression, "Diamond cut Diamond."

Other stones are what are known as splinters and are used for pointing drills for manufacturing and other purposes. Then we have the very small pieces used by glaziers for cutting glass, which, although they cut but 1-200 part of an inch deep, still dictate with unerring

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precision the lines upon which the break must run.

There is nothing in the condition of life concerning the diamond when it is introduced to the light of day that is prophetic of the future that awaits it. No forecast, however faint, of the part it is to play as a seal of plighted love. There is no poetry about diamond mining. Much of the labor is done by convicts, African convicts at that, perhaps the lowest form of civilization. Such laborers as are employed are engaged for terms of six or twelve months, during which time they are allowed no direct communication with the outside world, thus removing all inducements to steal. At one time it was found that laborers often swallowed stones, but of late years they are closely confined for one week before the expiration of their term of service, their clothes are entirely changed and a most rigid examination made of their persons, thus removing all danger of theft. In the earlier days illicit dealers, called I.D.'s, caused a great deal of trouble, as they were a source for the purchase of these stones from the natives, and the most rigid penalties have, therefore, been enacted, few crimes being looked upon so gravely.

The mines in South Africa number seven

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or eight. That known as the Kimberley, one of the most important, covers about twenty acres.

As already explained, the stones are found in a sort of blue clay, which is spread upon depositing floors several miles in extent for "weathering" in the sun and rain. After being separated the stones are washed and passed through several sortings until they are ready for market. This market is not in Africa, but in London. As already indicated, the entire output is always sold to a syndicate at a fixed figure per carat and for a given time. This syndicate controls the market price. If cut diamonds are ruling too high, at the next sale they put on the market a larger quantity of rough, and *vice versa*, if too low, they reduce the quantity, thus raising the price. This, I think, is a wise action, as if diamonds were too common it would lessen our admiration for them. In the case of the necessities of life such combinations are often a curse, but when it comes to the luxuries it is a question if all parties concerned are not perhaps the better served. Most of the rough diamonds find their way to Amsterdam, where as many as 15,000 people have been engaged in this industry. There is no special reason why this should

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have been made the head centre any more than any other spot, beyond that possibly it started there and has kept on increasing, just as is the case with tobacco, for which it is also one of the principal emporiums of the world.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CUTTING OF THE DIAMOND.

The process of cutting is purely a mechanical one. The stones are first cleaved, that is, trimmed, before being introduced to the polishing wheel. This is simply a wheel of about 18 or 20 inches in diameter, which revolves with the flat surface uppermost, the diamond being fastened in a steel arm and made to rest on it. Diamond dust mixed with oil is placed upon this wheel, and as it revolves at a very high rate, facet after facet is thus cut. These facets are not cut by chance, but on mathematical lines; just as holding a mirror at a certain angle reflects the sun, so the facets reflect and refract the rays of light. There are 58 such facets on every regular full cut brilliant diamond. What I have already referred to as "rose cut" simply means that the stone is not sufficiently deep to admit of regular cutting, and rather than sacrifice too much, instead

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of being cut to a point underneath, it is flat, with facets on the top. This, of course, renders the stone of much less value than a brilliant, possibly about one-quarter of the value of a brilliant of similar size and weight.

There is an impression in some minds that "a diamond is a diamond." I remember once seeing a horse of about 16 hands high for which \$57,000 had been paid, and yet we have all seen them quite as large which would be dear at \$57, and so with a diamond, color, freedom from flaws, and cutting are all determining factors in the value of a stone. It is supposed by many that white is the only color known to diamonds, but such is not the case, although it is the prevailing one. There is an aristocracy in diamonds as in everything else. I have here two samples, one of a black and the other of a coffee color. The black must not be confounded with the black diamonds, which, during the winter months, are so much in demand, as, although not very large in size, it is equivalent in value to over one hundred tons of the other. Stones such as this must not be considered in the same light as the slightly yellow stones, which are known as "bywater," and are of much less value than the white and are also very much more common.

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Such is the history of the diamond, this stone around which so much interest centres. I have devoted much time to its history, simply because the process of treatment to which all other stones are submitted is exactly the same. They differ only as to the place in which they have their origin.

CHAPTER V.

OTHER JEWELS.

We will devote a few minutes to what are known as colored stones. The emerald is found in a sort of slate stratum in South America, Ural Mountains and Egypt. It is never cut round but always square or oblong with the corners removed as in sample which I submit. One peculiarity of this stone is that it is almost an absolute impossibility to find one free from flaws so that the same standard of perfection called for in the diamond does not apply to it. It has always been a stone much admired. Nero it is said wore an eyeglass of a concaved emerald through which he glanced at the gladiatorial games in the Coliseum at Rome. It is said also that when Lucullus landed in Egypt and was met by Anthony he was presented with an emerald upon which his portrait was engraved.

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The ruby has its home in India, the Burmah pigeon blood being considered the most valuable. Then the Siam rank second. In large sizes the ruby is perhaps the most expensive of all the gems. The sapphire is also found there and differs little from the ruby other than in color.

Opals and turquoise, however, are not found as crystals but are really cut from the quartz. The old superstition regarding the opal being unfortunate has long since been exploded and it now finds a place among the coveted gems. Although found in Mexico, it is not found at its best there, those from Australia being much more full of life and fire. Hungary also furnishes a limited number.

The turquoise is found in Persia, Egypt, and also in certain parts of the United States. It has, however, the unfortunate faculty of changing color at times. One may have a ring with five stones perfectly matched and without apparent cause these might change into many different shades. This, however, being one of the characteristics of the stones is not looked upon with as much disfavor as might be supposed. Certain mines in the U.S., however, furnish stones that retain their color.

We will now come to the last one to

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which our attention is to be drawn—last but not least.

The pearl, like the diamond, finds almost universal acceptance. It is found in Ceylon, India, Persia, South America, Fiji Islands and West Indies. It is also found in fresh water. In our own St. Lawrence, for instance, quite a few specimens are found, but these fresh water stones are lacking in lustre and do not approach the Oriental in value. Since the invention of the diving bell, in certain directions changes have taken place in the mode of pearl fishing, but the system now found near Ceylon holds true of all pearl fishing among the natives in all countries.

There is an island some ten or twelve miles from Ceylon which has a frontage of about twenty miles, from which pearls have been regularly taken for 2,000 years. As you know, they are found in shells sometimes called oyster shells, but you must not confuse them with our dainty "blue points" as they are too coarse and rank for eating, and average in size about 9 inches, some of them running as much as one foot in length. The season for pearl fishing lasts for three months, beginning Feb. 1st. The boats are ten to fifteen tons and carry a crew of about thirteen, with ten divers, five of

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whom are up whilst the other five are down at the bottom of the sea. Their visits to Davie Jones' locker must not be confused with the average afternoon call, as it does not allow of much chance of gossip, as an expert diver can remain only in some 80 seconds, the majority not exceeding 60. When you deduct from this the time going and coming it does not leave much time for actual work. Each diver is supplied with a rope sufficiently long to reach the bottom at the end of which a large stone weighing about thirty pounds is attached and also a net work basket in which to bring up the shells. He simply puts his foot in a noose and drops overboard, his drop to the bottom hastened by the stone. Upon giving the signal he is immediately drawn up with his treasure. As soon as a load of from 20 to 30 thousand shells is secured the boats return home and shells are simply piled in heaps around a sort of vat and allowed to decompose, when, of course, the shells open, and the pearls are washed out and gathered, the shells being gone over afterwards to find any that may be adhering to them. At one time it was supposed that the pearl was a disease of the oyster, but it is now acknowledged that it has its start from a little speck, some say an abortive egg

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which is not discharged from the shell, which remaining there, irritates the oyster to a certain extent and it deposits a sort of mucus around it which keeps on increasing and consequently enlarging ; just as in real life one sometimes finds a truly noble and beautiful character evolved from some secret sorrow borne in patience, so in the depth of ocean this seeming evil is gradually transformed into a priceless gem.

Just now the Chinese are causing considerable anxiety to the statesmen of the world by their wily ways. There is evidence to prove, however, that such cunning is not confined to matters political. They have discovered means of manufacturing pearls by introducing a small shot into the shell of a molusk or oyster which gradually becoming covered is also transformed into a pearl. Further than this they combine their religion with their commerce by making very small metal images of Buddha and inserting them in like manner these gradually become covered in the regular way and are shown to the ignorant as striking evidence of the truth of the religion of Buddha.

Pearls are of many colors, the white or slightly cream white, of course, being the most acceptable, but whatever the color it

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must have a bright smooth skin, without which it is devoid of lustre. Although found in all manners of shapes, the perfect sphere is the most valuable, the pear shape, however, for certain purposes, being considered equally desirable. The question of size affects the value more in pearls than in any other precious stone. A single grain pearl such as I will show you is worth, we will assume, about \$3.00, and another weighing about 15 grains, instead of being worth \$45, as one might suppose, is worth about \$45 per grain or in the neighborhood of \$600. Some very valuable pearls have been discovered. One, as history tells us, that was dissolved and taken in a glass of wine by that fascinating Egyptian, Cleopatra, was worth, it is said, over \$400,000. A similar extravagance was perpetrated in later days by our Sir Thos. Gresham in the days of Queen Elizabeth, who at a banquet given to the Spanish Ambassador with a view of impressing him with England's greatness deliberately powdered and dissolved in a glass of wine a pearl of £15,000—\$75,000 - and rising in his seat gallantly quaffed it to the health of the good Queen Bess.

I have already appropriated rather more of your time than was allotted me, but thank

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you for your patient hearing, and will simply say in conclusion that, as we prize the more highly the brilliant jewel of liberty by recounting the obstacles encountered by our forefathers in its attainment, so I trust will the narrating of these few simple facts concerning jewels lead you to a higher and more intelligent appreciation of their beauty and worth.



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HOW TO CLEAN DIAMONDS.

WE are often asked by our patrons
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diamonds?”

To all who are thus interested we would
say that the most satisfactory way is to
simply wash them in hot water and soap,
adding a little spirits of ammonia, and
using a soft brush, after which dry in box-
wood sawdust.

We would advise saving the water
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For the convenience of our customers
we have in stock for this purpose a very
complete outfit, nicely cased, at a nominal
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SPECIAL.

YOU can purchase diamonds from us much more advantageously than at any other place on the continent, because :

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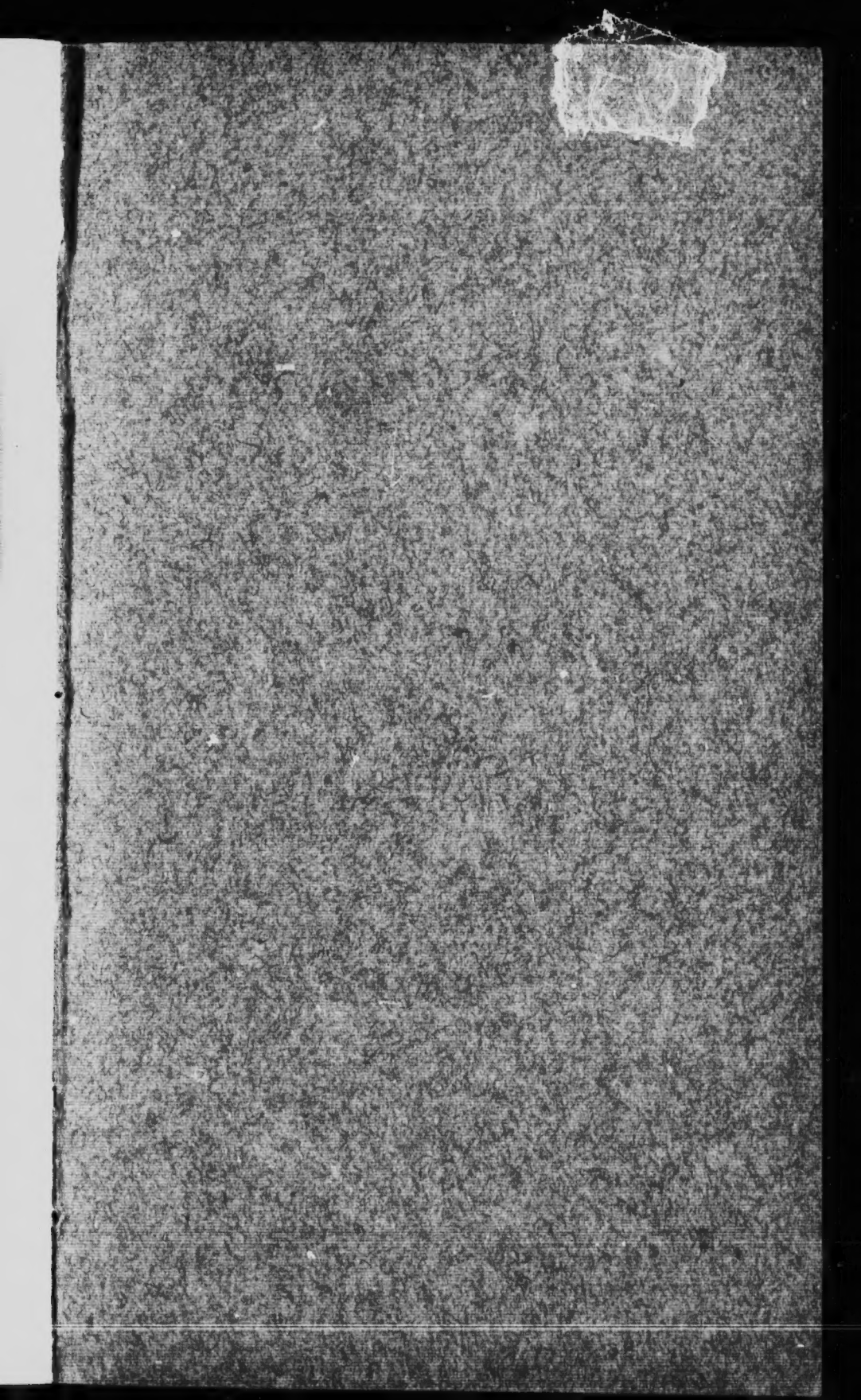
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